

Rymer, Edwina

From: Dellinger, Philip
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2015 9:08 AM
To: Johnson, Ken-E;Dorsey, Nancy;Graves, Brian;Bierschenk, Arnold
Cc: Bates, William;Green, Holly
Subject: FW: EARTHQUAKES: No conclusive cause yet for strong Texas quake

Wonder if they are using our tool.

From: Casso, Ruben
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2015 7:50 AM
To: Dellinger, Philip
Subject: EARTHQUAKES: No conclusive cause yet for strong Texas quake

EARTHQUAKES: No conclusive cause yet for strong Texas quake

Mike Lee, E&E reporter

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There is "no conclusive evidence" that oil and gas development caused the most powerful earthquake to strike the Dallas-Fort Worth region in recent years, Texas energy regulators said, although the investigation is continuing.

Shortly after a magnitude-4 earthquake struck May 7 near Venus, which is 30 miles southwest of Dallas, the Texas Railroad Commission ordered tests at five injection wells in the area that handle oil and gas waste.

The owners of the wells -- EOG Resources Inc., Bosque Disposal Systems LLC, MetroSaltwater Disposal Inc. and Pinnergy Ltd. -- voluntarily closed them. The test ordered by the commission, known as a fall-off pressure test, is designed to determine whether there are underground faults nearby, according to a [news release](#).

"While we can't say at this time there is a connection, **this is the beginning of the process, not the end in analyzing and understanding whether there is any correlation**" between the injection wells and the earthquake, Craig Pearson, the commission's staff seismologist, said in the news release.

Injection wells are typically used to dispose of wastewater from oil and gas production. A team of researchers at Southern Methodist University published a peer-reviewed paper in April that linked injection wells to a string of earthquakes near the town of Azle in 2013 and 2014 ([Greenwire](#), April 21).

The SMU researchers have also been monitoring the area around Venus, which has experienced 23 earthquakes since 2009. Azle is about 45 miles from Venus, but both towns sit over the Barnett Shale gas field, which is dotted with injection wells in addition to gas wells.

The oil industry has disputed the link between injection wells and the Azle earthquakes, and the Railroad Commission is holding hearings to determine whether it should take action against two companies singled out in the SMU report ([EnergyWire](#), June 11).